

**Hyde County Board of Commissioners  
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY SHEET**

**Meeting Date:** November 3, 2014  
**Presenter:** County Manager Bill Rich  
**Attachment:** Yes

**ITEM TITLE:** APPOINTMENTS

**SUMMARY:** Vacancies need to be filled on the Ocracoke Community Center Board.  
November 3, 2014 Doreen Gaskill Robinson and Sundae Horne were appointed.

**1. Ocracoke Community Center Board Nominee**

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Motion Made By: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Motion Seconded By: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Vote: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell
<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell
<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons
<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher
<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.

**2. Ocracoke Community Center Board Nominee**

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Motion Made By: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Motion Seconded By: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Vote: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell
<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell
<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons
<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher
<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.

**3. Ocracoke Community Center Board Nominee**

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Motion Made By: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Motion Seconded By: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Vote: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell
<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell
<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons
<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher
<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.

**4. Ocracoke Community Center Board Nominee**

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Motion Made By: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Motion Seconded By: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Vote: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell
<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell
<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons
<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher
<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.

**5. Ocracoke Community Center Board Nominee**

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Motion Made By: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Motion Seconded By: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Vote: <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell
<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell
<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons
<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher
<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.

**RECOMMEND:** Appoint members.

## Ocracoke Community Center Board of Directors

### Scheduled Meetings:

	Appointed	Term	Expires	Re-appointed
David Bundy	02/06/2012	Resigned		
Tom Pahl	03/03/2012	Resigned		
Mel Perez	10/07/2013	To Complete Term of David Bundy		
Barbara Jemison Ocracoke, NC 27960	01/17/2012	3 yr.	01/17/2015	
Margareta Gonzales	01/17/2012			
Jim Pearson	01/17/2012			
Katherine Parker-Lowe	01/17/2012	2 yr.	01/17/2014	
Doreen Gaskill Robinson Ocracoke, NC 27960 <a href="mailto:oislandgirl@hotmail.com">oislandgirl@hotmail.com</a>	11/03/2014			
Sundae Horne Ocracoke, NC 27960 <a href="mailto:sundaehorn@embarqmail.com">sundaehorn@embarqmail.com</a>	11/03/2014			

Ocracoke Community Center Board

Regular Meeting

April 16, 2013

Members in Attendance

Barbara Jemison, Jim Pierson, and Katherine Parker-Lowe

Meeting called to Order by Chairperson-Barbara Jemison

Minutes for February 25, 2013 meeting taken by Barbara Jemison approved and passed.

Treasurer's Report

Report reviewed by Barbara Jemison

Occupancy Tax

Barbara attended a meeting of the Occupancy Tax Board. Our information/request has been submitted. All organizations are waiting to hear from the Board.

Handicapped Parking

County will frame and pour the concrete for the handicapped parking slab. This work will be done in conjunction with the work at the trash/recycling center.

Terms for Board Members

It was brought to the Board's attention that all the current members were all appointed by the Hyde County Commissioners at the same time. The Commissioners did not establish the board members' terms for office. Generally, such boards established by the Commissioners have as follows:

- 2 members serve 1 year terms
- 2 members serve 2 year terms
- 1 member serves a 3 year term

The county manager suggested that the members agree amongst themselves to establish their terms and report this decision to the county. Additionally, Mr. Rich asked that the board members put forth names for consideration by the commissioners for replacement board members. Dave Bundy has asked to hold a one year term. After further discussion, Katherine Parker-Lowe agreed to serve a 2 year term and Barbara Jemison has agreed to serve a 3 year term.

This matter was tabled until the next meeting to solicit input from the absent members.

Building Operation Agreement with County

The search continues for a copy of the "Agreement" between the County and the Community Center Board on the operation of the building. The county manager gave Barbara Jemison a "summary" of the agreement. According to the summary, Occupancy Tax pays for utilities, general maintenance, and repairs while the county is responsible for major improvements. Discussion ensued concerning which party should be responsible for replacement of the electrical meter base.

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This matter was tabled until the next meeting.

Repair/Replace Floor

Discussion concerning whether to sand the dance floor area versus replace the flooring.

This matter was tabled until the Occupancy Tax amounts are awarded.

Meeting Adjourned.

**Hyde County Board of Commissioners  
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY SHEET**

**Meeting Date:** April 6, 2015  
**Presenter:** Kris Cahoon Noble  
**Attachment:** No

**ITEM TITLE:** Appointment to U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Steering Committee for Ecotourism

**SUMMARY:** In January of this year, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service North Carolina Coastal Plain Refuge Complex hosted an information meeting regarding ecotourism in northeastern North Carolina and a potential future workshop titled "Balancing Nature and Commerce". Representatives from Hyde and surrounding counties attended the meeting. Based on overwhelming response from participants, a full workshop will be held in the fall of this year. The USFWS has asked the Chair of the Hyde County Board of Commissioners to designate representatives from Hyde County to participate in a Steering Committee to assist in designing the fall workshop. We recommend the following representatives be appointed to the Steering Committee:

**Earl Pugh, Jr.-Hyde County Board of Commissioners  
Dick Tunnell-Hyde County Board of Commissioners  
Kris Cahoon Noble-Economic Development Coordinator, Hyde County  
April Temple-Trust for Tomorrow  
Jessica Gibbs-Hyde County Chamber of Commerce  
Janet Russ-Hyde County Chamber of Commerce  
Rosemary Johnson-Planning Assistant, Office of Planning/Economic Development**

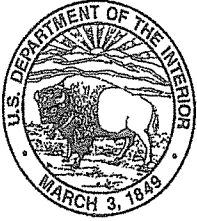
**RECOMMEND:** APPROVE APPOINTMENT OF THE ABOVE NAMED REPRESENTATIVES FOR HYDE COUNTY

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Motion Made By: \_\_\_ Barry Swindell  
\_\_\_ Dick Tunnell  
\_\_\_ Ben Simmons  
\_\_\_ John Fletcher  
\_\_\_ Earl Pugh, Jr.

Motion Seconded By: \_\_\_ Barry Swindell  
\_\_\_ Dick Tunnell  
\_\_\_ Ben Simmons  
\_\_\_ John Fletcher  
\_\_\_ Earl Pugh, Jr.

Vote: \_\_\_ Barry Swindell  
\_\_\_ Dick Tunnell  
\_\_\_ Ben Simmons  
\_\_\_ John Fletcher  
\_\_\_ Earl Pugh, Jr.



# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

### NORTH CAROLINA COASTAL PLAIN REFUGE COMPLEX

P. O. Box 1969

Manteo, North Carolina 27954

(252) 473-1131

March 4, 2015

Barry Swindell, Chair  
Hyde County Commission  
7119 Sladesville-Crelle Rd.  
Scranton, NC 27875

Dear Mr. Swindell,

On January 28, 2015 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service North Carolina Coastal Plain Refuge Complex hosted an information meeting regarding ecotourism in northeastern North Carolina and a potential future workshop titled "Balancing Nature and Commerce". Over 50 people attended that meeting representing varied interests from Dare, Hyde, Tyrrell, Washington, Martin, Bertie, and Halifax counties. The overwhelming response from participants was that we should pursue the workshop to be held in the fall of this year. We are writing to ask you as Chair of your County Commission, to designate a representative(s) from your county to participate in a Steering Committee to assist in designing the fall workshop.

The Steering Committee will meet on a monthly basis, either in person or by phone, to provide input to The Conservation Fund, the workshop organizer, on topics, cost, location and other details associated with the workshop. The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 31 at 9:00am at the Service's Gateway Visitor Center in Manteo. We are taking the liberty to suggest the following person(s) because they participated in our initial meeting and would bring a skill set to the planning that would greatly benefit the effort.

Jamin Simmons – Dare to Hyde Excursions, Agriculture Community  
April Temple – Trust for Tomorrow  
Kris Noble – Economic Development Coordinator, Hyde County  
Janet Russ – Hyde County Chamber of Commerce

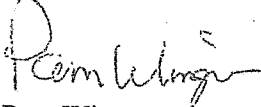
However, of course, if you know of someone who you would prefer to designate we value your judgment on this.

For your information, attached is additional information on the workshop and a program in Pennsylvania that represents a successful ecotourism initiative that began with a similar workshop conducted by The Conservation Fund. As you are aware, the Albemarle Commission is an economic development partner within our region, and they are partnering with us in our efforts to further promote ecotourism within the Region. We hope that you and your county will see value in this endeavor and participate as a partner as

well.

We will contact your designees directly when we hear from you whom you have selected and inform them of meeting times, locations and other details. Please feel free to contact either of us if you have any questions or require further information. Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,



Pam Wingrove  
Natural Resource Planner  
North Carolina Coastal Plain Refuge Complex  
P.O. Box 1969  
100 Conservation Way  
Manteo, NC 27954  
252-473-1132 ext. 246  
[Pamala\\_wingrove@fws.gov](mailto:Pamala_wingrove@fws.gov)



Cathy Davison  
Executive Director  
Albemarle Commission  
P.O. Box 646  
512 S. Church St.  
Hertford, NC 27944  
252-426-5753 ext. 227  
[cdavison@albemarlecommission.org](mailto:cdavison@albemarlecommission.org)

Cc: Bill Rich

**Potential Project Timeline:**

- MONTH 1: Kick-off meeting (***\*\*full day in-person planning meeting with local Design Team***)
- MONTH 2: Confirm date, venue and title of workshop  
Confirm registration process and fee  
Draft agenda
- MONTH 3: Confirm agenda  
Send save-the-date  
Identify and invite speakers (including keynote and luncheon)  
Solicit sponsorships
- MONTH 4/ MONTH 5: Send out registration materials/conduct marketing/outreach  
Confirm speakers  
Identify resource materials  
Coordinate Share Fair
- MONTH 5/ MONTH 6: Compile resource materials  
Coordinate with speakers re: materials  
Coordinate share fair
- MONTH 6/MONTH 7: Registration Deadline – first week of October.  
Compile/produce notebooks
- MONTH 7/MONTH 8: Workshop Delivery

**Balancing Nature and Commerce Program Contact Information:**

Kate Allen, Senior Training Associate, The Conservation Leadership Network  
698 Conservation Way, Shepherdstown, WV 25443



Ph: (304) 870-7925



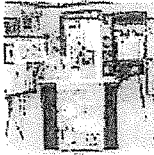
Email: [kallen@conservationfund.org](mailto:kallen@conservationfund.org)



- 10:00 – 11:00**      **Session 6: Looking at Alternative Energy for Rural Communities**  
*Jamie Hart, Madison County Department of Planning*  
*Jan Myers, Morrisville State College*
- 11:00-12:00**      **Session 7: Transportation and Rural Livability**  
*Shana Baker, Federal Highway Administration*
- 12:00 – 1:00**      **LUNCH**
- 1:00 – 2:00**      **Session 8: Emerging Issue: Food Security**  
*Joe Hankins, Freshwater Institute*
- 2:00 – 4:15**      **Team Planning Exercise Part II: Assessing Your Assets and Preliminary Project Identification**
- 4:15 – 5:15**      **Session 9: Financing Strategies**  
*Linda McKenna Boxx, Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation*
- 5:15 – 5:30**      **Daily Wrap Up**  
*Kris Hoellen, The Conservation Fund*

**Day 3: Wednesday, February 6 – Action Planning!**

- 8:30 – 8:45**      **Morning Announcements**  
*Kris Hoellen, The Conservation Fund*
- 8:45 – 9:45**      **Session 10: Strategic Planning for Land Conservation**  
*Kendra Briechele, The Conservation Fund*
- 9:45 – 10:00**      **BREAK**
- 10:00 – 11:00**      **Session 11: Engagement through Marketing and Branding**  
*Ted Eubanks, Fermata, Inc.*
- 11:00 – 3:30**      **Team Planning Exercise Part III: Action Planning (includes lunch)**  
*Kris Hoellen, The Conservation Fund*
- 3:30 – 4:30**      **Team Presentations of Rural Community and Landscapes Action Plans**  
*Kris Hoellen, The Conservation Fund*
- 4:30 – 5:00**      **Wrap Up and Evaluations**  
*Kris Hoellen, The Conservation Fund*



## **Resources**

Visit the [PA Wild Resources Center](#) to keep informed about the community revitalization efforts going on around the region. You can also uncover some of the best artisan creations in the PA Wilds and where to find them [here](#).



## **News & Events**

Keep up to date with the latest [DCNR news](#) from the PA Wilds, visit [here](#) to sign up for the E-Update online newsletter (at the bottom of the page), and have a look through some [upcoming events in the region](#). [This fact sheet](#) summarizes the 2013 accomplishments of the PA Wilds.



## **Key Investments**

Find out how investments in the PA Wilds region have spurred private-sector business growth and job creation, and delivered a conservation message.

**Hyde County Board of Commissioners**  
**AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY SHEET**

**Meeting Date:** November 3, 2014  
**Presenter:** County Manager Bill Rich  
**Attachment:** No

**ITEM TITLE:** APPOINTMENTS

**SUMMARY:** Vacancies need to be filled on the B/H/M Regional Library Board.  
Nominations are needed to represent the Ocracoke Community.

**1. Nominee**

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Motion Made By:	<input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Motion Seconded By:	<input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Vote:	<input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell
	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell		<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell		<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons		<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons		<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons
	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher		<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher		<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher
	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.		<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.		<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.

**2. Nominee**

---

Motion Made By:	<input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Motion Seconded By:	<input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Vote:	<input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell
	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell		<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell		<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons		<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons		<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons
	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher		<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher		<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher
	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.		<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.		<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.

**3. Nominee**

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Motion Made By:	<input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Motion Seconded By:	<input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell	Vote:	<input type="checkbox"/> Barry Swindell
	<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell		<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell		<input type="checkbox"/> Dick Tunnell
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons		<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons		<input type="checkbox"/> Ben Simmons
	<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher		<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher		<input type="checkbox"/> John Fletcher
	<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.		<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.		<input type="checkbox"/> Earl Pugh, Jr.

**RECOMMEND:** Appointment.

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** Bill Rich <brich@hydecourtync.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015 4:23 PM  
**To:** 'Lois Stotesberry'  
**Subject:** FW: Resignation from BHM Board

**From:** Trisha Davis [<mailto:davis.115.osu@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 30, 2015 3:44 PM  
**To:** Edwin Modlin; Ed Modlin  
**Cc:** Bill Rich; Scott Bradley  
**Subject:** Resignation from BHM Board

Hi Ed,

This email serves as my official resignation notice from the BHM Library Board. I have not been able to attend the meetings in the last year due to scheduling conflicts and a new job commitment.

We have recommended Liz Hotchkiss to John Fletcher and Bill Rich as my replacement on the Board. She has lived in Williamston as well as Ocracoke and is very familiar with the entire BHM region. She is a strong library supporter. I know she'll be a welcome addition and a good representative for Ocracoke.

It has been a pleasure to serve under your leadership and I wish you all success in the coming years.

Trisha

**Hyde County Board of Commissioners**  
**AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY SHEET**

**Meeting Date:** April 6, 2015  
**Presenter:** Manager Bill Rich  
**Attachment:** Yes

**ITEM TITLE:** ACCOUNTING SERVICES AGREEMENT  
ANDREW HARRIS, CPA

**SUMMARY:** Hyde County Manager Rich has offered a contract to provide accounting consulting services for the County to Andrew Harris, CPA, PLLC.

**Duties include:**

- a. Recommendations to improve internal controls of each accounting cycle
- b. Provide training to the finance department staff
- c. Assist with the year-end audit engagement preparing reconciliations, etc.
- d. Preparation of the financial statements at year-end
- e. Assist with accounting policies and procedures
- f. Preparation of an accounting procedures manual for the finance department staff
- g. Assist with the implementation of any accounting software
- h. Assist with the annual budget and budget amendments
- i. Assistance with any other finance department related duties that the County Manager or Finance Director deem are necessary

**Compensation at hourly rates:**

- a. Andrew Harris \$75.00 per hour
- b. Accounting Staff (if needed) \$40.00 per hour
- c. Travel cost such as lodging and meals shall be reimbursed at 100% of cost
- d. Mileage will be reimbursed at the IRS standard mileage rate

**RECOMMEND:** Approve.

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Motion Made By: ☐ Barry Swindell  
☐ Earl Pugh, Jr.  
☐ Dick Tunnell  
☐ Ben Simmons  
☐ John Fletcher

Motion Seconded By: ☐ Barry Swindell  
☐ Earl Pugh, Jr.  
☐ Dick Tunnell  
☐ Ben Simmons  
☐ John Fletcher

Vote: ☐ Barry Swindell  
☐ Earl Pugh, Jr.  
☐ Dick Tunnell  
☐ Ben Simmons  
☐ John Fletcher

## ACCOUNTING SERVICES AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT, (the "Agreement"), is made this the \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ and is effective as of the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, by and between Hyde County (hereafter known as "County" and ANDREW HARRIS CPA PLLC (hereinafter known as "the Accounting Firm").

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of County's employment of Harris and the payments to be made pursuant to Section 2 hereof, and other good and valuable consideration, the sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the County and the Accounting Firm agree as follows:

1. *Duties.* Subject to the other provisions of this Agreement, the County offers and the Accounting Firm accepts, a contract to provide accounting consulting services for the County. These services include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Recommendations to improve internal controls of each accounting cycle
  - b. Provide training to the finance department staff
  - c. Assist with the year-end audit engagement preparing reconciliations, etc.
  - d. Preparation of the financial statements at year-end
  - e. Assist with accounting policies and procedures
  - f. Preparation of an accounting procedures manual for the finance department staff
  - g. Assist with the implementation of any accounting software
  - h. Assist with the annual budget and budget amendments
  - i. Assistance with any other finance department related duties that the County Manager or Finance Director deem are necessary

Andrew Harris CPA PLLC will devote its full talents and best efforts to the County during the term of his contract and devote the necessary time and energy

to the performance of those duties and responsibilities as listed above, and shall use his best efforts, skills and abilities to promote the interests of the County.

2. *Rates.* The Accounting Firm shall receive compensation at hourly rates listed below for Andrew Harris and his accounting staff, if needed:

Andrew Harris	\$75 per hour
Other staff, if needed	\$40 per hour

Travel costs such as lodging and meals shall be reimbursed at 100% of cost.

Mileage will be reimbursed at the IRS standard mileage rate.

3. *Miscellaneous.*

- a. The County agrees to furnish to the Accounting Firm all materials needed to perform the required services under this Agreement
- b. The parties agree that the Accounting Firm will perform the services hereunder at the Hyde County Municipal Building and also at the Accounting Firm's office. The Accounting Firm is responsible for keeping accurate records of its hours and expenses and will forward monthly those records to the County.

4. *Nondisclosure.* The Accounting Firm will have access to certain "Confidential Municipal Information" of the County not known or available by proper means through sources outside the County, which may include lists of customers' names, addresses, status of billing owed by County citizens and other non-public information related to County citizens. Harris will not disclose any Confidential Municipal Information of the County to any third party nor use any Confidential Municipal Information for any purpose other than the furtherance of County's business, whether before or after termination of employment of the Accounting Firm. The Accounting Firm will return all Confidential Municipal Information to County promptly upon termination of its contract.

5. *Termination.* This agreement shall be terminable at any time by either party upon giving thirty (30) days written notice of said termination.

6. *Surrender of Materials upon Termination.* Promptly upon termination of the Accounting Firm's contract with County, whether voluntary or otherwise, the

Accounting Firm shall surrender to County all property belonging to County, including but not limited to Confidential Municipal Information, equipment and supplies, and records, notes, materials, drawings, photographs, computer-generated or computer-retrievable data, and other writings or recordings of any kind relating to the actual or anticipated business of County or to Confidential Municipal Information.

7. *Assignment.* This Agreement is not assignable, and shall not be assigned by the Accounting Firm.
8. *Severability.* In the event any of the provisions of this Agreement shall become or be declared invalid or unenforceable, the invalid or unenforceable provision or provisions shall to that extent be deemed removed and the remaining provisions shall continue to be enforced according to their terms.
9. *Governing Law.* This Agreement shall be deemed executed in the State of North Carolina regardless of the actual place of signature or of the actual place of performance. This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of North Carolina.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the County and the Accounting Firm have caused this Agreement to be executed all as of the date first above written.

HYDE COUNTY

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BARRY SWINDELL, Chairman

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ANDREW HARRIS, Sole Member  
Andrew Harris CPA PLLC



**Hyde County Board of Commissioners  
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY SHEET**

**Meeting Date:** April 6, 2015  
**Presenter:** Sheriff Guire Cahoon  
**Attachment:** Yes

**ITEM TITLE:** REQUEST FOR SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER POSITION

**SUMMARY:** Sheriff Cahoon will present request to hire a Resource Officer to serve both Mattamuskeet Elementary and Mattamuskeet Early College High School.

**RECOMMEND:** Approve.

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Motion Made By: ☐ Barry Swindell  
☐ Earl Pugh, Jr.  
☐ Dick Tunnell  
☐ Ben Simmons  
☐ John Fletcher

Motion Seconded By: ☐ Barry Swindell  
☐ Earl Pugh, Jr.  
☐ Dick Tunnell  
☐ Ben Simmons  
☐ John Fletcher

Vote: ☐ Barry Swindell  
☐ Earl Pugh, Jr.  
☐ Dick Tunnell  
☐ Ben Simmons  
☐ John Fletcher

**Hyde County Board of Commissioners  
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY SHEET**

**Meeting Date:** April 6, 2015  
**Presenter:** Manager Bill Rich  
**Attachment:** Yes

**ITEM TITLE:** TOURISM DEVELOPMENT/OCCUPANCY TAX

**SUMMARY:** Manager Rich will present update on the proposed tourism board on Ocracoke and use of Ocracoke Occupancy Tax funds.

**RECOMMEND:** Approve.

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**Motion Made By:** \_\_\_ Barry Swindell  
\_\_\_ Earl Pugh, Jr.  
\_\_\_ Dick Tunnell  
\_\_\_ Ben Simmons  
\_\_\_ John Fletcher

**Motion Seconded By:** \_\_\_ Barry Swindell  
\_\_\_ Earl Pugh, Jr.  
\_\_\_ Dick Tunnell  
\_\_\_ Ben Simmons  
\_\_\_ John Fletcher

**Vote:** \_\_\_ Barry Swindell  
\_\_\_ Earl Pugh, Jr.  
\_\_\_ Dick Tunnell  
\_\_\_ Ben Simmons  
\_\_\_ John Fletcher

	FY 14-15 Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Appropriations
Direct Tourism	\$55,250.00
Indirect Tourism	\$54,550.00
Community Oriented	\$489,682.00

Direct	Amount	Line Item
	\$30,000	Lewis Advertising
	\$10,000	OCBA Travel/Tourism Director
	\$12,750	OCBA Tourism promotion
	\$2,500	Hyde Chamber
TOTAL	\$55,250	

Indirect	Amount	Line Item
	\$10,000	Lifeguards
	\$26,000	Pirate Jamboree
	\$2,000	British Cemetery Ceremony
	\$12,050	Fourth of July
	\$4,500	Ocrafolk Festival
TOTAL	\$54,550	

Community	Amount	Line Item
	\$46,250	Community Center
	\$14,497	Community Center Repairs
	\$5,000	Boy Scouts
	\$48,000	Ocracoke Commnity Park
	\$10,000	OPS
	\$80,000	OVFD
	\$1,590	Frieds of the Library
	\$180,000	Hyde EMS
	\$35,000	Ocracoke Child Care
	\$21,345	Ocracoke Chile Care
	\$7,500	McClees Consulting
	\$40,500	WOVV
TOTAL	\$489,682	

Hyde County Public Meeting  
Ocracoke Tourism Promotion  
March 12, 2015 at 7:30PM  
Ocracoke Community Center

Key members present: Manager Bill Rich, Planning & Economic Development Director Kris Noble, Commissioner John Fletcher, Commissioner Earl Pugh, & PIO Sarah Johnson

Roughly 25 community members and business owners present

County Manager Rich opens the meeting and welcomes the group

- Bill overviews public comments received over the past two months.
- Bill presents the idea of creating an Ocracoke Visitor Bureau out of the existing 3% occupancy tax, rather than increasing occupancy tax by 2%. The proposed Ocracoke Visitors Bureau would include a full-time position of a Visitors Bureau Director and Public Information Officer.
- Bill recognizes that 60% of county revenue comes from Ocracoke and the county has a lot to win from increasing tourism on Ocracoke. This idea will be presented to the Commissioners in April with the goal of implementation starting July 1.

Kris Noble goes over the revised tourism promotion study.

- Shows that sales and use tax countywide has been growing. Occupancy tax has also followed a positive trend. There is great opportunity for improving occupancy tax collection in the spring and fall.
- Currently occupancy tax is allocated with roughly 80% to community-oriented projects and roughly 20% to tourism promotion (10% to direct tourism promotion & 10% to indirect tourism promotion).
- Overviews strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Kris gives information about alternative approaches to tourism including a comparison of Ocracoke's occupancy tax rate and appropriations to regional neighbors. Kris describes regional and state networks.

Public Comment:

- Bill explains the \$100K budget for the visitors bureau would be annual, it should be self-supporting (through increased revenue) after the first year.
- Imagine how much occupancy tax revenue will grow with a dedicated employee -Garrick Kalna
- Suggestion that the money allocated for tourism promotion be based on the amount of occupancy tax collected - Ann Eringhaus
- Question about the board set up and the funding for the position. How much of the director's position would be paid for by the occupancy tax and how much by the county?  
– Kari Styron
  - Bill explains it would be a 3-person board with a director, separate from the occupancy tax board. \$10K would come from the county's budget for the Public Information Officer position, \$40K would come from the Ocracoke Visitors Bureau budget

- Concern that tourism promotion will still be fractioned if the position is through Hyde County. Why not have the position be under OCBA? – Connie Leinbach
  - Bill points out the county is already connected to every network within in the state.
  - Commissioner Fletcher suggests there be one board that handles all tourism issues.
- Concern that the county doesn't have the appropriate marketing expertise – Bob Chestnut
  - Bill explains the county would contract with a professional marketing group and notes that Kris Noble has ample experience contracting with professional consultants.
- Question about how the three board members will be selected – Ashley Harrell
  - Bill thinks they need to be hospitality people (because lodging generates occupancy revenue) or at least involved with tourism.
- Question about the potential for outside funding sources if this visitors bureau is an official entity – Garrick Kalna
  - Bill thinks there are possibilities for funding sources
- Question regarding the mission of the tourism group – Bob Chestnut
  - Bill says the basic mission is to fill heads in beds in the shoulder season
- Concern that it is not financially feasible for businesses to stay open during the winter with just a promise that there will be tourists (with reference to NCCAT) – Leslie Lanier
- We need to put out positive information, most of the information that gets to major media is negative – Leslie Lanier
  - Bill thinks that why it should be tied into the public information officer position.
- OCBA has done a great job improving visibility for the island and the improving web presence. – Sundae Horn
- I talk regularly with folks from travel and tourism. I think the presentation missed out on actions that OCBA does well. Part of the limitation is the fact that the OCBA position is only quarter-time. – Sundae Horn
- I think it's a great idea; I'm opposed to increasing occupancy tax 2%. We've found that it is very easy to promote Ocracoke. – Bill Gilbert
- How much of an increase are you projecting for the off-season? – Ashley Harrell
  - Bill says he hopes to increase occupancy by 20% overall
- Concern about the years that don't generate as much occupancy tax revenue as the prior year. Suggestion to tie spending to a percentage of occupancy tax revenue – Ann Eringhaus
  - I think we should double the budget in that situation, so the word gets out – Johnny Giagu
- Some of the money could come from the Occupancy Tax Board's reserve. Some of these appropriations are not regular – Bob Chestnut
- Concern about community projects not having adequate funding – Ann Eringhaus
- Kris Noble says she applaud OCBA for what they've done, but thinks they are challenged. Her vision is not to compete with OCBA, but to support them.
  - Concern that there might be competition if the money for the visitors bureau has to come out of the money OCBA receives from the occupancy tax board – Sundae Horn

- Question about hiring local and where the office would be located – Ashley Harrell
  - Bill explains the office would be on Ocracoke and the position would be advertised and open to anyone.
- This proposal appears to provide some structure by way of the county. Who would the director be supervised by? – Wayne Clark
  - Bill says Kris Noble would be the supervisor, but the director would be responsible to the three member board.
- Question of whether or not this is the normal method for the creation of a tourism development authority? – Wayne Clark
  - Bill says a TDA would only happen if the additional 2% is approved.
- As a former occupancy tax board member, it is hard to choose what to fund. This would take some choice out of choosing between a community group and tourism advertising. I think it is good to somewhat segregate those monies – Wayne Clark
- Concern that low shoulder season rates will make it harder to add to the occupancy tax revenue. Suggestion that collaboration with OCBA and accountability/tracking are top priorities – Bob Oakes
- Concern that there is a certain amount of resistance to shoulder season business, because people like to have winters off – Sundae Horn
  - Bill says he wants to create a situation where local oyster farming could spawn a monthly oyster roast during the winter.
- The beauty of shoulder season events is that you create targeted dates, so you can decide as a group when to bring people to the island and what needs to be open during that time and you can see the direct impact (reference to the Ocracoke Festival) – Gary Mitchell
- We need help in the spring and fall – Wayne Clark
- We need someone to analyze this data and figure out what target audiences come during the different season – Bob Chestnut

#### Conclusion

- Commissioner Earl Pugh tells the crowd that the commissioners need public comments because that is how they make decisions. He thinks a tourism board should be given two years to get established and working, before its progress is analyzed.
- Bill and Kris thank everyone for attending and note that all public comments should be submitted by Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup> to be included in the commissioner's packets for April.

## Bill Rich

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**From:** Bob Chestnut <bob@surfocracoke.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2015 1:26 PM  
**To:** jeanmincey@yahoo.com  
**Cc:** Sarah Johnson; knoble@hydecourtnc.gov; brich@hydecourtnc.gov  
**Subject:** Support of Ocracoke Visitors Bureau

Dear Hyde County Commissioner,

I'm in favor of creating a Visitors Bureau on Ocracoke to help enhance our tourism efforts.

- • Many of our businesses seem to be "just getting by" as opposed to thriving and growing.
- • There are many factors (Ferry, Road, NPS Permits & Restrictions, Weather) preventing potential tourist from getting here, but relatively little coordinated marketing effort to get them on the island.
- • There are downward trends in ferry traffic that will ultimately have to be made up if we are to sustain our current business tax paying levels.

We need a coordinated marketing effort to analyze information, develop plans, and monitor results to keep Ocracoke competitive and desirable in this rapidly changing and unpredictable environment. This is best accomplished through the creation of a group, supported administratively by the county, such as the proposed Ocracoke Visitors Bureau.

Given the relative importance of tourism to our county's economic fortunes, this effort should be a major component of our county Economic Development Plan and therefore have a direct link to our Economic Development Department. While I wouldn't want our Economic Development team to create our marketing plan in isolation, I do think it should provide logistics, administrative support and coordination to the effort. The Public Information need is also a very important part of this effort and I support its link to the process as well. I also believe that Tourism Development should be an ongoing major component of the Economic Development Department's mission.

I think it is appropriate that the money for this should initially come from current occupancy tax funds. However, we have become accustomed to using these funds for community initiatives not directly linked to tourism and to abruptly cut this funding by the amount needed would create an undue hardship on the citizens of Ocracoke. If the funds were not available through normal occupancy tax collections, I would recommend funding the Visitors Bureau with excess occupancy tax reserve funds, at least for the first year and depending on availability of adequate reserves the second year as well. After 18-24 months of activity by the Visitors Bureau we should be able to assess the value of the investment and make a decision on longer term funding.

Bob Chestnut  
Ride The Wind Surf Shop  
P.O. Box 700/486 Irvin Garrish Hwy  
Ocracoke, NC 27960  
252-928-6311  
[bob@surfocracoke.com](mailto:bob@surfocracoke.com)

## Bill Rich

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**From:** Wayne Clark <hubertwayneclark@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 12, 2015 9:52 PM  
**To:** 'Bill Rich'  
**Cc:** jeanmincey@yahoo.com; sarah.johnson@hydecourtnc.gov; 'Kris Noble'; NATURAL SELECTIONS; tootoo4u@embarqmail.com  
**Subject:** FW: Visitors Bureau

3/12/15

My view is that what you proposed is a "good start" for a more coordinated, structured and responsible advertising effort for the Island. If it goes as projected, the effort will be valued thus gain momentum as to more investment as to the mission. It is time for this very important task to move away from the Volunteer Efforts of a few to something whereby those directly involved can be more accountable as to progress made.

H. Wayne Clark  
Edwards of Ocracoke  
Rooms and Cottages



## Bill Rich

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**From:** nagsheadbarn@aol.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2015 2:38 PM  
**To:** Brich@hydecourtync.gov  
**Subject:** Ocracoke 2% OT

Dear Mr Rich,

I moved to Ocracoke from Nags Head five years ago. After 20+ years in Nags Head I got tired of the traffic and the various folks who moved in with a "better" way to run things. With that in mind I am hesitant to speak up about the OT question. However, considering that I plan on making this my permanent home I thought I would throw my 2 cents in on the 2% question.

I can't imagine that an extra 2% tax on short term rentals would cause folks to forgo a visit to Ocracoke considering that the rest of the Outer Banks charges the same tax. Dare county and the various towns have used this extra money to both enhance visitors' experiences and have benefited residents year round. I'm thinking in particular of the bike paths and parks that did not exist when I first moved down here.

I hope that the reason that the board would reject this tax is not because they would not have direct control over its expenditure.

Sincerely,

Barney Bielecki  
PO Box 1687  
241 Cutting Sage Rd  
252-402-8607

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** al scarborough <scarboroughal@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2015 9:43 AM  
**To:** ocracoke current; info@ocracokeobserver.com  
**Cc:** Bill Rich; Frank Brown; lstotesberry@hydecountync.gov; Kris Noble  
**Subject:** A Giant Step Backward for Ocracoke

### A GIANT STEP BACKWARDS FOR OCRACOCKE

Evidently a proposal to provide Ocracoke with an additional \$200,000+ in occupancy tax funding has resulted in a decision to reduce Ocracoke's funding by \$100,000 annually and give that amount to Hyde County. It should be noted that Hyde County already gets almost \$50,000/year (10% of occupancy revenue). What is done with that money?

Under the best case it is suggested that by giving control of \$100,000 to the county it is projected that we may increase the occupancy tax revenue by \$100,000. This is hardly a move forward. Anyone who believes that spending \$100,000 to make \$100,000 is a winning strategy needs to take a basic course in business. Mr. Rich stated that we could "take \$100,000 (from Occupancy tax revenue) without hurting anybody". The real question should be, does it help Ocracoke. While it may be legal to divert \$100,000 annually from the Ocracoke occupancy tax board to the Hyde County Government, it is definitely not in the spirit of the legislation that specified that 90% of the funds be for the benefit of Ocracoke. The legislation did not suggest that the occupancy tax was to benefit businesses on Ocracoke.

Mr. Rich states that he hopes to increase the shoulder season occupancy taxes by \$100,000. I can understand why the lodging group favors this approach. If by chance this approach does increase occupancy tax revenue by 20%, (even Mr. Oakes who evidently helped to write this approach recognizes that it is unlikely to achieve that objective) it would mean that the lodging industry would have increased their income by \$3,500,000 annually. ( Yes, you read that correctly, to get \$100,000 in occupancy tax there must be Three and one half Million Dollars in additional revenue to the lodging group.) Spending \$100,000 of public money to increase occupancy rates at private business seems like a real good deal for motels and cottages.

If this 20% increase materializes Ocracoke would be back to where we were if no changes were made. This is not progress.

The county's stated goal of an additional 3 million dollars in revenue must be a misstatement. Current county sales tax and lodging taxes revenues are less than 3 million. To raise 3 million in sales and occupancy taxes would require at least an additional \$100,000,000 (one hundred million dollars) in sales taxes and lodging rentals. It is not possible to achieve that goal.

Let's forget the additional 2% tax. What could we get for the \$100,000 that will now go to the county? Will we have public restroom facilities? Will we have adequate daycare for the lodging industries employees or will the citizens of Ocracoke be asked to buy tee shirts and donuts to keep this vital program alive? Will the fire department, the youth center, the ball field, the health center, festivals continue to rely on their own volunteers because of a \$100,000 reduction in the available funds?

Even more puzzling is why the advice offered by the Ocracoke's Occupancy Tax Board was ignored? The suggestion to have a 2-3 year trial with professional tourism firm funded from the existing funding and directed by our local board (not the county) is a much better option. The county's proposal to have a board consisting of

members of the lodging group direct the spending of the money neglects a significant portion of the Ocracoke business community and the general population.

For years Ocracoke had struggled to get what we consider a fair share of county funds. The legislation that established the occupancy tax was the first time that Ocracoke was given some say in how tax dollars were spent on Ocracoke. We will be conceding (permanently) control of a big chunk of dollars that the legislature authorized for the benefit of Ocracoke.

This is not another just a missed opportunity. This a step backwards for Ocracoke.

Al Scarborough

March 15, 2015

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** nagsheadbarn@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2015 6:28 PM  
**To:** lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov  
**Subject:** Ocracoke occupancy tax

Dear Ms. Stotesberry,

My name is Barney Bielecki and I have been a resident of Ocracoke for the past 5 years.

Would you please forward my thoughts on the Ocracoke occupancy tax to the commissioners.

1. It is foolish not to take advantage of the additional 2% OT tax that is available to Ocracoke. All the other jurisdictions on the Outer Banks take advantage of this revenue source and have used it to both increase tourism and the quality of life for their residents.

2. If for some reason the board decides not to take advantage of this revenue then it should absolutely not tap the existing occupancy fund for a new position and programs that the new 2% tax would have funded.

Please thank the commissioners for taking my views into account.

Sincerely  
Barney Bielecki  
PO Box 1687  
241 Cutting Sage Rd.  
252-402-8607

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** al scarborough <scarboroughal@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2015 9:51 AM  
**To:** middletownfarms@embarqmail.com; adtunnell@coastalnet.com; John Fletcher; twsbcsiii@aol.com; Barry Swindell  
**Cc:** Bill Rich; Sarah Johnson; Frank Brown; lstotesberry@hydecountync.gov; David Styron; ocracoke current; info@ocracokeobserver.com  
**Subject:** Ocracoke occupancy tax

March 16, 2015

Dear Hyde County Commissioners,

Before acting to permanently appropriate \$100,000 annually from the OT (occupancy tax) and designate this to the general fund of Hyde County, it might be beneficial to read the Chapter 806 , House Bill 13444 which details how this money can be used.

The three most important and relevant sentences are:

“Hyde County may use the proceeds of the occupancy tax for any public purpose.”

“The county shall spend ninety percent (90%) of the proceeds collected on Ocracoke only for the benefit of the island.”

“The island advisory board shall advise the board of commissioners on the expenditure of tax proceeds for the direct benefit of the island”.

The wording is clear and explicit. Nowhere does it direct any of the funds to be used to promote tourism (although it doesn't prohibit it).

If there is a strong need to promote tourism, there is a Session Law 2006-128 House bill 882 which authorizes the levying of a 2% occupancy tax 2/3 of the proceeds are to be used for “promotion of travel or tourism.”

There is no need or justification for taking \$100,000 annually to promote tourism from proceeds collected under House Bill1344 when House Bill 882 is specifically designated for that purpose.

Ocracoke and Hyde County should use all the resources available to provide services to residents and visitors.  
Robbing Peter to pay Paul is not a step forward.

Respectfully,

Al Scarborough

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** Bill Rich <brich@hydecountync.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2015 10:48 AM  
**To:** 'Lois Stotesberry'  
**Subject:** FW: Ocracoke Tourism Meeting

Please include with the other letters for BOC meeting/OVB. Also Lois please go on line and print the newest Al Scarborough letter to the editor on Ocracoke Observer and Current. It was posted Sunday I believe. Thanks.

Bill

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**From:** Kris Noble [<mailto:knoble@hydecountync.gov>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 17, 2015 9:19 AM  
**To:** 'Sarah Johnson'; 'Bill Rich'  
**Subject:** FW: Ocracoke Tourism Meeting

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**From:** The Anchorage Inn [<mailto:info@theanchorageinn.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2015 9:41 AM  
**To:** 'Kris Noble'  
**Subject:** Ocracoke Tourism Meeting

Dear Ms. Noble:

I would like to follow up on the 3/12/15 Public Meeting in Ocracoke concerning tourism promotion strategies. As I said at the meeting I believe that your idea of utilizing \$100,000.00 from the Occupancy Tax money to create a tourism promotion position and advertising campaign in Hyde County is a fantastic idea. I believe that it will take 2-3 years to see the full effect of the campaign and would not like this idea to be discarded after 1 season. We have seen in our advertising for The Anchorage Inn & Marina that many of the people we contact may not come to visit immediately but may visit the following year. Also many of the people who come to Ocracoke will return at a later date.

At this point, I am opposed to increasing the Occupancy Tax. I believe that we have several critical issues with access to Ocracoke Island, which include ferry issues, problems with Oregon Inlet Bridge, and problems on Highway 12 that are currently hindering tourism.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on your plans.

Bill Gilbert  
THE ANCHORAGE INN & MARINA  
OCRACOCKE ISLAND, NC

March 17, 2015

Ocracoke's Occupancy Tax is the only opportunity for the people of Ocracoke to choose where to spend funds for the benefit of Ocracoke. Through the years, the Board has labored to see that the occupancy taxes are allocated to the various applicants where they can do the most good for the community.

Ocracoke's economy has suffered along with the rest of the nation with a dismal economic recovery. We have also been affected by over regulation, high gas prices and Mother Nature's relentless assault on Route 12 and the ferry channels. Despite these adversities, we have endured.

Why is Hyde County insisting on inserting itself where we have exercised such good judgement in dispersing the occupancy funds that the Hyde County Commissioners have consistently ratified our decisions? Why is the County Manager pushing so hard to create a county government position to administer our marketing efforts and taking \$100,000 of our occupancy funds to do it?

We are told they will increase Ocracoke's lodging sales by 20% resulting in a \$100,000 increase in occupancy tax revenue to make the proposed new county position and county administered marketing efforts self-supporting. I do not see how it can be done. Five months of the year, November through March, will contribute little to this effort because other than a weekend here or there, the rate of occupancy approaches zero and there isn't much enthusiasm to effect a change. Three months, June-August, have occupancy rates of 80-95%, leaving little room for improvement. That leaves those shoulder months, April-May and September-October. Those four months last year generated \$142,000 in occupancy tax revenue. To achieve the goal of \$100,000, lodging sales would have to increase up to 70% for those four months. Further study may show that shoulder season lodging is primarily weekends at discounted rates. This would mean having to not only increase the numbers for weekend stays, but also creating a huge increase in longer stays.

Looking at 2013 numbers, lodging sales were about \$14 million on Ocracoke and county retail, restaurants and grocery sales approached \$40 million. Taking an estimated 10% off for the mainland, still leaves \$35-36 million in Ocracoke. What I'm saying here is that while lodging produces occupancy tax, the other island establishments contribute 2 ½ times more to our economy and much of that comes from "day visitors".

While I sincerely thank Kris and Sarah for their efforts, I do not agree with the plan that the county is proposing. I do agree that Ocracoke's marketing efforts need to be focused and coordinated. I see no need to establish a county government position for marketing. I do see a need for some qualified outside help to figure where we are, where we are going and how we are going to get there. A local ad hoc committee could be formed to find those people.

The marketing opportunities for Ocracoke could benefit from professional evaluation and a professional marketing plan executed by professional marketing people. In collaboration with OCBA, we would appreciate the opportunity to pursue this course and reevaluate our position in a couple of years.

I sincerely ask that the Hyde County Commissioners vote this proposal down.

Frank Brown



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Monday, February 16, 2015 - 01:21

The right for any county or municipality in NC to levy any tax can only be authorized by an act of the legislature.

Basically, there are only two taxes which are available to all counties in NC – sales and property. Others, such as food and beverage taxes, land transfer taxes, and occupancy taxes must be authorized by acts of the legislature. House Bill 882 was ratified in 2006 giving Hyde County the ability to increase the current occupancy tax.

Why not have a food and beverage tax and/or a land transfer tax rather than increase the Occupancy tax? The General Assembly has not approved these in years due to the strong restaurant and real estate lobbies.

What about the sales tax? Hyde can raise it .25% (one fourth of one cent). This could raise around \$100,000 a year and not necessarily benefit Ocracoke.

The current occupancy tax of 3% is the lowest of any coastal county in N.C. (Indeed, I suspect it may be the lowest of any occupancy tax on the east coast.)

Hyde is one of the 10 poorest counties in NC. Dare is one of the 10 richest counties. One thing the rich counties have in common is access to higher occupancy taxes, some have a food and beverage tax, and some have a land transfer tax. Dare has all of these revenue streams.

If we had been collecting the additional 2% tax when it was first authorized by the state in 2006, Ocracoke would have benefited by over 2 million dollars (revenue from the additional 2% is estimated to be in excess of \$250,000 every year) – that is the firehall and the ballfield.

Don't be fooled. Businesses only collect sales taxes and lodgings only collect the occupancy tax. They do not pay the tax.

While 2/3 of the 2% additional tax (approx. \$160,000 after the administration fee) must be used to "promote tourism," 1/3 (approx. \$80,000) can be used for "tourism related expenditures." 90% of the original 3% tax can be used for any purpose for "the direct benefit of the island." What this means is Ocracoke would have access to approximately \$500,000 every year to benefit the island at no cost to over 800 island residents and taxpayers. This is \$500,000 controlled by Ocracoke .

Given that Ocracoke's tax will not exceed adjacent counties, it is a poor argument to suggest that people will choose to not stay on Ocracoke. I doubt that anyone vacations on Ocracoke because of the lowest rate and I feel confident that Ocracoke has a lot more to offer than low occupancy tax rates.

How could the expenditure of \$160,000 on promoting tourism benefit all businesses and specifically the lodging industry? What has done the most to fill up motels and cottages during what was once a slow week? Thanks to the dedication and forward thinking of Gary Mitchell and David Tweedie the first weekend of June (Ocracoke Festival) is now a virtual sellout for beds on Ocracoke. What if we had a paid promoter? How long can we expect people to volunteer their time and energy to organize events

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** Bill Rich <brich@hydecourtynyc.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015 4:57 PM  
**To:** 'Lois Stotesberry'  
**Subject:** FW: Tourism board

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**From:** Ocracoke Island Golf Carts [<mailto:giagu@embarqmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 25, 2015 4:00 PM  
**To:** [brich@hydecourtynyc.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtynyc.gov)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Tourism board

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Ocracoke Island Golf Carts <[giagu@embarqmail.com](mailto:giagu@embarqmail.com)>  
**Date:** March 25, 2015 2:29:19 PM EDT  
**To:** Bill Rich <[billrich3@mindspring.com](mailto:billrich3@mindspring.com)>  
**Subject:** Tourism board

To the Hyde County Commissioners,

I am writing this letter in support of the proposed Ocracoke Tourism Board. As a small business owner, taking into consideration the the uncertainty of the NC ferry tolls, Highway 12 overwash and the Bonner Bridge, I have increased my advertising budget this year, not to grow my business, but simply in the hope of maintaining the same revenue as years past. With the universal embrace of the internet, Ocracoke is now competing for "vacation dollars" on an international basis. Our neighbors to the north and south have all increased the budget and sophistication of their marketing efforts. While the individual businesses on the island do a fine job of advertising on their own, the lack of centralized push promoting Ocracoke as a whole is detrimental to all of us. The promotion of Ocracoke Island as a destination needs to be a priority. I strongly support the use of Occupancy Tax dollars for the establishment of an Ocracoke Tourism Board. A full-time entity focused solely on "banging the drum" for Ocracoke could only be positive.

Thank You,

John Giagu

[john@ocracokeislandgolfcarts.com](mailto:john@ocracokeislandgolfcarts.com)  
[www.ocracokeislandgolfcarts.com](http://www.ocracokeislandgolfcarts.com)  
252-928-0090

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** billrich3@mindspring.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 28, 2015 2:13 PM  
**To:** brich@hydecourtnc.gov  
**Subject:** FW: occ tax \$\$ for tourism board

Original email:

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**From:** Pony Island Motel [info@ponyislandmotel.com](mailto:info@ponyislandmotel.com)  
**Date:** Sat, 28 Mar 2015 08:55:28 -0400  
**To:** [brich@hydecourtnc.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtnc.gov)  
**Subject:** occ tax \$\$ for tourism board

Mr. Rich,

I am expressing my concerns for taking some of the Occ. Tax money to fund a tourism board. I personally do not think we need a tourism board on or for Ocracoke. I think what we need to do is press the state and NCDOT to repair the ferries and continue dredging so we can offer more ferry runs to get the tourist to Ocracoke. The tourist are there they are just having a hard time reaching Ocracoke. I hope you will not vote for this money being taken out and putting towards something we do not need. If we have this kind of extra money I think we need to put it towards getting ART back in the school on Ocracoke.

Thanks for your time,

Candy Gaskill

PS I am writing this from my work email address so if you have a reply to me could you send it to my personal one at [dayzlv66@yahoo.com](mailto:dayzlv66@yahoo.com). The reason I am commenting from work is because we get the updates here from the county and I don't at my personal email.

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mail2web.com - Microsoft Exchange solutions from a leading provider - <http://link.mail2web.com/Business/Exchange>

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** billrich3@mindspring.com  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2015 6:55 PM  
**To:** brich@hydecourtynyc.gov  
**Subject:** FW: Ocracoke Advertising

Original email:

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**From:** Wayne Clark [hubertwayneclark@gmail.com](mailto:hubertwayneclark@gmail.com)  
**Date:** Fri, 27 Mar 2015 14:35:27 -0400  
**To:** [brich@hydecourtynyc.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtynyc.gov)  
**Subject:** FW: Ocracoke Advertising

3/27/15

Bill

As I have indicated, it is my view that it is time for our Government to take the responsibility as to advertising/tourism for Ocracoke/the County.

This is too important a task to be the responsibility of a Volunteer Group be it OC&B or the Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Board. A hired individual that reports to a Volunteer Board tends to not be accountable as is needed. A position in Government will be accountable ultimately to all the people by way of the governmental process (Planning Department/County Manager/County Commissioners). If the politics are not in place for a conventional Tourism Development Authority (additional 2% occupancy tax), what you have proposed is in order. Perhaps a Tourism Development Authority can be the next step as to implementing what is the norm in other Counties? It is time for our Citizens to put their faith in their elected officials as opposed to being obstructionist when logical proposals are put forth. If this cannot be done, the continuance of a "quasi local government" (decisions by Volunteer Boards) is not what is best for the Island in my view. Accountability and responsibility is paramount to promoting Ocracoke. This can be best accomplished by way of Government not Volunteer Boards.

H. Wayne Clark

Edwards of Ocracoke

Rooms and Cottages

Ocracoke Island, North Carolina

[www.edwardsofocracoke.com](http://www.edwardsofocracoke.com)

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mail2web - Check your email from the web at <http://link.mail2web.com/mail2web>

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** billrich3@mindspring.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 28, 2015 2:15 PM  
**To:** brich@hydecourtnc.gov  
**Subject:** FW: Ocracoke Advertising

Original email:

-----  
**From:** [billrich3@mindspring.com](mailto:billrich3@mindspring.com) [billrich3@mindspring.com](mailto:billrich3@mindspring.com)  
**Date:** Fri, 27 Mar 2015 18:55:06 -0400  
**To:** [brich@hydecourtnc.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtnc.gov)  
**Subject:** FW: Ocracoke Advertising

Original email:

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**From:** Wayne Clark [hubertwayneclark@gmail.com](mailto:hubertwayneclark@gmail.com)  
**Date:** Fri, 27 Mar 2015 14:35:27 -0400  
**To:** [brich@hydecourtnc.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtnc.gov)  
**Subject:** FW: Ocracoke Advertising

3/27/15

Bill

As I have indicated, it is my view that it is time for our Government to take the responsibility as to advertising/tourism for Ocracoke/the County.

This is too important a task to be the responsibility of a Volunteer Group be it OC&B or the Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Board. A hired individual that reports to a Volunteer Board tends to not be accountable as is needed. A position in Government will be accountable ultimately to all the people by way of the governmental process (Planning

Department/County Manager/County Commissioners). If the politics are not in place for a conventional Tourism Development Authority (additional 2% occupancy tax), what you have proposed is in order. Perhaps a Tourism Development Authority can be the next step as to implementing what is the norm in other Counties? It is time for our Citizens to put their faith in their elected officials as opposed to being obstructionist when logical proposals are put forth. If this cannot be done, the continuance of a "quasi local government" (decisions by Volunteer Boards) is not what is best for the Island in my view. Accountability and responsibility is paramount to promoting Ocracoke. This can be best accomplished by way of Government not Volunteer Boards.

H. Wayne Clark

Edwards of Ocracoke

Rooms and Cottages

Ocracoke Island, North Carolina

[www.edwardsofocracoke.com](http://www.edwardsofocracoke.com)

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mail2web - Check your email from the web at <http://link.mail2web.com/mail2web>

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mail2web.com Enhanced email for the mobile individual based on Microsoft Exchange -  
<http://link.mail2web.com/Personal/EnhancedEmail>

## Kris Noble

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**From:** Bob Chestnut <bob@surfocracoke.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2015 2:43 PM  
**To:** Kris Noble  
**Subject:** Occupancy Tax Proposal  
**Attachments:** Occupancy Tax Letter.pdf; Untitled attachment 00088.htm

Hey Kris,

Here's a copy of a letter I just sent Fletcher & company related to your Tourism Marketing Research that are my comments on the topic. I also wanted to pass on a few thoughts to our "Planning and Economic Development" Chief. I'm very suspect about the "government" getting involved in anything too core business operations related. But this is one area where there's plenty of potential for our local government to help grow business revenues. To be honest until I saw your presentation I hadn't given much thought to your department and what it does. I've looked back at the newsletters posted on the county website to try and clarify the department mission and don't worry this isn't my attempt to justify you becoming the Tourism Director for Ocracoke or including the function in your department. However, I think your department definitely has a key role in Ocracoke's tourism development.

I don't know what percentage of the economy of Hyde County is related to tourism, but from your presentation the numbers seem large enough to warrant the county's direct involvement and support. Just as you would work to create more jobs in agriculture or the fishing industry, a continuing effort should be made to create more jobs in tourism. The business loans that have been done for startups on this island are a great example of how much of an impact your department can have directly. Indirectly, one key component of the "infrastructure" needed for tourism enhancement(some people don't want more, just better tourism) is the creation of a strategic vision for tourism on our island that we can buy into county wide.

One of the problems with structuring and getting support for Ocracoke's tourism development is that our community is fractured along several different lines. First of all, there is a large segment(retirees, non-resident homeowners that don't rent, residents not directly tied to tourism, etc.) that don't want to see our tourism numbers increase. Secondly there is the lodging group, that is concerned with overnight guests. Then there's the retail businesses and a portion of the restaurants, that have become dependent on day tripper traffic to meet volume goals. You heard a sampling of those attitudes in the questions and comments following your presentation. This diversity among our individual business goals is why we need an island wide strategy we can all buy into.

This is the area that your department can have a tremendous impact, by driving the process of developing a strategic tourism development plan for Ocracoke Island. I saw the September newsletter about the Recreation Master Plan that starts out with the statement "*after nine months of meetings, research, public workshops, and community surveys*" your department developed a master plan. I think we need a similar effort with regard to tourism development, in the form of a high-level vision. We have the talent on this island to be successful, but as you pointed out in your presentation we don't have enough time because we're all volunteers. This is an excellent opportunity for the county to step in and help facilitate, organize, and assist us in developing this vision.

Thanks again for the Marketing Research work, it was greatly appreciated and needed.



**Ride The Wind, Inc.**

PO Box 700  
Ocracoke, NC 27960  
252-928-6311

February 17, 2015

Mr. John Fletcher  
Hyde County Commissioner  
PO Box 1479  
Ocracoke, NC 27960

Mr. Fletcher,

Please consider the following comments when discussing the proposed additional occupancy tax for Ocracoke Township. First of all, the Department of Planning and Economic Development should be commended on the excellent job they did of compiling information and presenting their findings. While the data used was not complete it does present us with a limited picture of opportunities to further develop our tourist market on Ocracoke.

**I am not in favor of adding an additional tax at this time.** But I do feel many of the points of Kris Noble's presentation were valid.

- Ocracoke Village needs a vision for tourism and a marketing plan.
- Ocracoke could certainly benefit from a full time Tourism Development Director
- Our visitor numbers are declining and at some point that will reduce our individual businesses profitability and growth potential.
- The competition for tourism dollars is increasing and we need to be able to respond.

However, my biggest concern is that based on this research we were shown a very vague problem and you will be asked to vote on a solution. We haven't really defined the problem or developed even a high level strategic objective yet somehow we feel if we had another \$200,000 or so we could solve the problem. My wife and I have owned and been "hands on" operators of our business here on Ocracoke for the last 15 years. We would like to increase our volume of business as well as our profitability every year. The first step in our annual analysis is not to go see how much money we can find to spend on building our business. First we develop a plan, then determine the cost of the plan, and then start figuring out if we need to find more dollars to implement or if we need to reduce the cost of our plan. We didn't invent this process, it's a proven business practice. Ocracoke needs a plan before we raise taxes on anyone.

For the purpose of my comments I will assume that we do in fact need to spend money to develop tourism on Ocracoke. I'm sure you are aware that there is a significant portion of the population of Ocracoke that would disagree. These residents seem to have been left out of the discussion, but should be considered before a decision is made to raise the Occupancy Tax.

Since I do feel we should be expanding our tourism efforts, I would like to offer another alternative to the approaches presented by the Economic Development Department. The following approach or some variation of it would allow us to complete much needed further analysis and develop essential strategic objectives while still being able to start work building tourism as fast as possible. This recommendation would include the following:

- **Appointment of a Tourism Board on Ocracoke.** This board could be identical in makeup to that outlined in NCSL 2006-128. I'm not sure of the mechanics or legality but either a board could be created outright or perhaps the proposed law could be enacted with zero tax. Their immediate mission would be to develop the initial strategy for Ocracoke. They will need limited funding initially, but this first step of developing a high level plan would be essential to the success of the whole endeavor.
- **Allocate first year funding from current Occupancy Tax reserves.** The amount of this need hasn't been determined, but could be determined on an ongoing basis throughout the first year. The reserve could be used to begin implementation of any plans.
- **Use the experience and plans of the new Board's first year to determine the need for ongoing funding.** After that first year, there would be enough information to determine the need and if so the amount of the additional tax. If there were need for additional tax it would be simple to put NCSL 2006-128 in place and transition the existing board into the new TDA.
- **Utilize the current assets of the County and Ocracoke.** Our Planning and Economic Development Department should be a key resource for this effort. Tourism drives Ocracoke's economy and our economy is a major contributor to the finances of the county. More of the Planning and Economic Development Departments time should be spent growing and supporting tourism on Ocracoke. Kris Noble and her staff and our PIO Sarah Johnson are excellent and competent resources to contribute to and support this effort and should be utilized. In addition, the current occupancy tax funds a part time position for marketing that could also be integrated into the process. So as you can see we already have many of the pieces to get started without raising the tax.

In summary, if we want to increase the quality of services the county provides for the lowest individual resident taxes possible then a viable option to meet this goal is to increase tourism revenue. However, immediately adding a 2% Occupancy tax is reckless. We've all heard the saying, "Half of the money spent on advertising is wasted". One sure way to guarantee that outcome is to pass out money before figuring out what you're trying to buy.

Bob Chestnut  
Owner  
Ride The Wind Surf Shop

## Kris Noble

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**From:** The Anchorage Inn <info@theanchorageinn.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 13, 2015 9:41 AM  
**To:** 'Kris Noble'  
**Subject:** Ocracoke Tourism Meeting

Dear Ms. Noble:

I would like to follow up on the 3/12/15 Public Meeting in Ocracoke concerning tourism promotion strategies. As I said at the meeting I believe that your idea of utilizing \$100,000.00 from the Occupancy Tax money to create a tourism promotion position and advertising campaign in Hyde County is a fantastic idea. I believe that it will take 2-3 years to see the full effect of the campaign and would not like this idea to be discarded after 1 season. We have seen in our advertising for The Anchorage Inn & Marina that many of the people we contact may not come to visit immediately but may visit the following year. Also many of the people who come to Ocracoke will return at a later date.

At this point, I am opposed to increasing the Occupancy Tax. I believe that we have several critical issues with access to Ocracoke Island, which include ferry issues, problems with Oregon Inlet Bridge, and problems on Highway 12 that are currently hindering tourism.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on your plans.

Bill Gilbert  
THE ANCHORAGE INN & MARINA  
OCRACOCKE ISLAND, NC

March 18, 2015

OCBA meeting

**OCBA proposal for enhanced marketing**

According to the Tourism Development Authority presentations in February, sales-and-use collection for 2014 is about \$1.326 million, up from \$1.29 million collected in 2013.

As for Occupancy Tax, Hyde County will collect the most it's ever collected with more than \$446,000 in 2014, up from \$425,000 collected in 2013.

So, we ask what's the problem?

Our opinion is that yes, our marketing could be more cohesive but it's not ineffective. There are other problems impeding development of Ocracoke, chief among them is getting here--the Bonner Bridge, Highway 12 on Pea Island and the ferry system.

Instead of authorizing a Tourism Development Authority right now, or another Hyde County employee, the OCBA would like to make its own proposal to the Occupancy Tax Board later this month for funding. The following is just a rough draft as the OCBA has not yet approved this. We will meet March 18 to approve the following proposal:

1. Boost the Travel & Tourism Director (TTD) position to a part-time position. Now it is quarter-time and is being done by Sundae Horn. This will allow her to work more with Hyde County government, the Hyde County Chamber, other outside tourism agencies, and handle/help coordinate various tourist-drawing events on the island. (See attached list of events.)
2. Hire a professional marketing company to help us analyze tourism on the island, advertising effectiveness, design a brand for the entire island, recommend a mix of advertising/promotion for maximum effectiveness.
3. Seek more money to enhance our website [www.ocracokevillage.com](http://www.ocracokevillage.com)
4. Ask for collaboration with the Occupancy Tax Board to market Ocracoke for an increase in advertising funds.
5. Work with the county planning department for visioning and strategic planning
6. Set up a community business committee for marketing input

These would be the major components of our proposal

The Occupancy Tax Board has indicated it would be amenable to this proposal instead of another authority/board on the island.

**The following is information by the OCBA's travel and tourism director Sundae Horn in response to the TDA presentation:**

In the presentation on the Tourism Development Authority, there were ways in which OCBA was misrepresented.

- Kris listed "missing out on regional and state networks of tourism promotion" as a weakness. There may be some that we are missing out on, but the OCBA keeps up with Dare County, the Outer Banks Visitor Bureau, the ferry system, VisitNC (especially when they send travel writers), OBX National Scenic Byway, Saltwater Connections, Heritage Trails (Sundae is on the Heritage Trails website review committee), NC Mountains-to-Sea Trail, NC Catch, Historic Albemarle Tour and the National Park Service.
- She also listed state and regional networks under "other approaches" but we are already networking with state and regional organizations under our current approach. See above.
- Another weakness was "lack of continuity in personnel and funding" and under "threats" was "turnover of staff and volunteers within OCBA, OT board and chamber." What does this mean?
- One of her suggestions to improve the existing framework was to "collaborate with NC Ferry and NPS." We already do that, especially since, thanks to Hyde County manager Bill Rich, Ferry Division officials are coming to Ocracoke every month. These meetings have accomplished a lot this year. Dave Hallac is also eager to work with OCBA and Sundae has a good working relationship with Cyndy Holda, as well as the local rangers, Ed Fuller and Shane Bryan.
- Kris's really valid point is updating the website presence. Sundae is doing a pretty good job with social media, but the website could be better. It needs to be updated annually by someone with a good eye for design trends and the skills to make significant changes. Sundae has lots of ideas for the website that she can't implement because she doesn't have the skills.
- Part of the grant from OT could fund overhauling the website. Then Sundae could maintain it.
- One of the things we can be proud of is getting lifeguards after we were told we wouldn't have them. Sundae started a change.org petition to get NPS to fund lifeguards. We got over 1100 signatures--and we got lifeguards last year as well as again this year.
- It shows the power of free social media to get the word out quickly. The fact that we've been able to get lifeguards, fight ferry tolls (for three consecutive years now), have a committee working on fireworks, etc., shows that OCBA gets a lot done.

As for the proposal for tonight, I would like to add that That could be added under the part about: "One of her suggestions to improve the existing framework was to "collaborate with NC Ferry and NPS." We already do that, especially since, thanks to Bill Rich, Ferry Division officials are coming to Ocracoke every month. These meetings have accomplished a lot this year." Perhaps add wording that.

## **The following is what Sundae Horn has done in 2014 working quarter-time.**

My duties in 2014:

### **Visitor information:**

- Answering emails from potential visitors:
- 184 emails from Feb 1, 2014 – Jan 31, 2015 (I count each email address; not the number of emails they sent. Some people have many questions and we go back and forth for several emails, but I only counted those as one.)
- 141 email requests for mailings (Mailings include asset brochure, walking map and cover letter)
- Phone calls: 258 calls Feb 1, 2014 – Jan 31, 2015
- Requests (by individuals) for brochure: 56
- Requests (by places) for boxes of brochures: 18

### **Information distribution:**

- Sending informative emails to OCBA members
- Website updates on ocracokevillage.com
- Updates on VisitNC.com
- Wrote press releases about 4th of July activities, Hurricane aftermath, Fig Festival, lifeguard funding, etc.
- Re-stocked walking maps around the island, at NPS Visitor Center, and at ferry landings.

### **Social Media:**

- Facebook page: Ocracoke Village-Ocracoke Island (6100+ Likes)
- Twitter: @ocracokevillage (1800+ followers)
- Instagram: ocracokevillage (330+ followers)

When Sundae posts a photo to Instagram, it also posts to Twitter and Facebook. Photos often get shared or re-tweeted, and they get lots of attention, likes, comments, etc. on our pages. She posted 150+ photos in the past year.

She posts events and news on Facebook (daily during the season when events for visitors are happening.)

### **Event Coordination:**

- Coordinated 4th of July events (with help from excellent volunteers)
- Fig Festival in August – new event to use \$ set aside for 4<sup>th</sup> of July
- Helped to promote other events not sponsored by OCBA (Historic Home Tour, Ocrafolk Festival, Pirate Jamboree, Blackbeard play, Oyster Roast, Portsmouth Homecoming, 5K, fundraisers)

**Advocacy:** Change.org petition to get NPS to fund lifeguards. We got over 1100 signatures – and we got lifeguards.

### **Liaison:**

- Working with travel writers (most are connected with me by NC Division of Tourism/VisitNC)
- Village tours for travel writers, coordinating lodging and comped meals for travel writers, organizing activities for travel writers, hosting a dinner for two travel writers at the request of the NC Division of Tourism
- Some links for sample stories:
- <http://www.visitnc.com/trip-idea/explore-the-north-carolina-coast-by-ferry>

- <http://www.boston.com/travel/destinations/2014/04/05/memorable-encounters-ocracoke-island/G1eG2NBoWh4LyAFpEaaDZJ/story.html>
- Provided copy and/or information for travel writers
- Meetings and tours with marketing company and writers for Scenic Byways
- Working with: Historic Albemarle Tour, Saltwater Connections
- Serve as OCBA liaison for OPS Special Events committee, Ocracoke Festival committee, Hyde County Chamber of Commerce, Outer Banks Heritage Trails
- Working on the Heritage Trails website on the website Review Committee

#### **Visitor Center:**

Looking better all the time. Walking maps were very popular. Including NPS materials was a good idea.

#### **Purchased advertising in:**

- 2014 Spring edition of Outer Banks This Week: 2-page spread about visiting Ocracoke based on article I wrote
- 2014: Ad on the “wrapper” that goes around Outer Banks guides, including Ocracoke Guide
- 2014 edition of Outer Banks Magazine (1/4 page ad)

#### **Ocracoke Current cross-over:**

Posting OCBA minutes and meeting notices

Calendar of Events

Keeping a list of open businesses during off-season

Articles that are of interest to OCBA's agenda (i.e. lifeguards, island events)

#### **Ocracoke events**

2015

Clam Chowder Cook-off April 4

5K/10K—last weekend in April

OISFT first weekend in May

Memorial Day

Ocracoke Festival—first full weekend in June

Women's Arm Wrestling--June

July 4

Labor Weekend

Fig Fest—Aug. 14

Blackbeard's Pirate Jamboree

AA convention

OPS House Tour--December

Oyster Roast—late Dec.

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** William Rich <billrich3@mindspring.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015 8:45 PM  
**To:** Lois Stotesberry  
**Subject:** Fwd: Ocracoke Visitor Bureau

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Joseph Ramunni <josephramunni@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Mar 26, 2015 6:02 PM  
**Subject:** Ocracoke Visitor Bureau  
**To:** [billrich3@mindspring.com](mailto:billrich3@mindspring.com)  
**Cc:**

Dear Hyde County Commissioners,

Starting off, I want to thank you for your time and energy dedicated to the service of Hyde County. Your leadership and keen decision making touches each of our lives here on Ocracoke in many ways.

As a business owner on Ocracoke, I am delighted in the prospects of the Ocracoke Visitor Bureau. As we know, almost all businesses here absolutely depend on tourists spending money. This is unique for a town, causing need for unique services.

The service of promoting tourism and spreading relevant information to our visitors and potential visitors is as important as any other service Hyde County is currently involved in. Wisely investing available funds from the Occupancy Tax to successfully promote more tourism during the shoulder seasons of spring and fall will undoubtedly increase revenues for our village as well as Hyde County.

The OVB should be created to work closely with and to enhance the ground work done locally by our business association.

Thank you,

Joseph Ramunni

Community Store



## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** William Rich <billrich3@mindspring.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015 8:44 PM  
**To:** Lois Stotesberry  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: Ocracoke Advertising

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Wayne Clark <hubertwayneclark@gmail.com>  
Date: Mar 27, 2015 2:35 PM  
Subject: FW: Ocracoke Advertising  
To: [brich@hydecourtync.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtync.gov)  
Cc:

3/27/15

Bill

As I have indicated, it is my view that it is time for our Government to take the responsibility as to advertising/tourism for Ocracoke/the County. This is too important a task to be the responsibility of a Volunteer Group be it OC&B or the Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Board. A hired individual that reports to a Volunteer Board tends to not be accountable as is needed. A position in Government will be accountable ultimately to all the people by way of the governmental process (Planning Department/County Manager/County Commissioners). If the politics are not in place for a conventional Tourism Development Authority (additional 2% occupancy tax), what you have proposed is in order. Perhaps a Tourism Development Authority can be the next step as to implementing what is the norm in other Counties? It is time for our Citizens to put their faith in their elected officials as opposed to being obstructionist when logical proposals are put forth. If this cannot be done, the continuance of a "quasi local government" (decisions by Volunteer Boards) is not what is best for the Island in my view. Accountability and responsibility is paramount to promoting Ocracoke. This can be best accomplished by way of Government not Volunteer Boards.

H. Wayne Clark  
Edwards of Ocracoke  
Rooms and Cottages  
Ocracoke Island, North Carolina  
[www.edwardsofocracoke.com](http://www.edwardsofocracoke.com)

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** William Rich <billrich3@mindspring.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015 8:43 PM  
**To:** Lois Stotesberry  
**Subject:** Fwd: Bill, I was present at the OCBA meeting the other night and I heard your argument, however after some contemplation I and at least two other Island people have decided that the institution of the additional 2% occupancy tax for tourism only is the b

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Jim Borland <[jsborland@centurylink.net](mailto:jsborland@centurylink.net)>

**Date:** Mar 27, 2015 4:37 PM

**Subject:** Bill, I was present at the OCBA meeting the other night and I heard your argument, however after some contemplation I and at least two other Island people have decided that the institution of the additional 2% occupancy tax for tourism only is the best way to handle the situation. First and foremost it doesn't impact directly the hoteliers, the tax is levied like the sales tax, so the customer not the hotelier, pays the additional amount, which is all of about 5 bucks on a \$150 per night room. On a weekly rental of say \$1500 per week, it is about \$30 bucks, so not a deal breaker by any stretch of the imagination. All in all we feel the 2% option saves money and keeps the control in local, if new, hands. So that is our comment, I know you will do what's best. Jim Borland et al

**To:** "[brich@hydecourtnc.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtnc.gov)" <[brich@hydecourtnc.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtnc.gov)>

**Cc:**

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>

> Sent from my iPad

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## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** William Rich <billrich3@mindspring.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015 8:43 PM  
**To:** Lois Stotesberry  
**Subject:** Fwd: occ tax \$\$ for tourism board

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Pony Island Motel <[info@ponyislandmotel.com](mailto:info@ponyislandmotel.com)>  
Date: Mar 28, 2015 8:55 AM  
Subject: occ tax \$\$ for tourism board  
To: [brich@hydecourtnc.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtnc.gov)  
Cc:

Mr. Rich,

I am expressing my concerns for taking some of the Occ. Tax money to fund a tourism board. I personally do not think we need a tourism board on or for Ocracoke. I think what we need to do is press the state and NCDOT to repair the ferries and continue dredging so we can offer more ferry runs to get the tourist to Ocracoke. The tourist are there they are just having a hard time reaching Ocracoke. I hope you will not vote for this money being taken out and putting towards something we **do not need**. If we have this kind of extra money I think we need to put it towards getting ART back in the school on Ocracoke.

Thanks for your time,  
Candy Gaskill

PS I am writing this from my work email address so if you have a reply to me could you send it to my personal one at [dayzlviz66@yahoo.com](mailto:dayzlviz66@yahoo.com). The reason I am commenting from work is because we get the updates here from the county and I don't at my personal email.

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** William Rich <billrich3@mindspring.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015 8:42 PM  
**To:** Lois Stotesberry  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: occ tax \$\$ for tourism board

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "billrich3@mindspring.com" <billrich3@mindspring.com>  
Date: Mar 28, 2015 2:12 PM  
Subject: FW: occ tax \$\$ for tourism board  
To: [brich@hydecourtnc.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtnc.gov)  
Cc:

>  
>  
> Original email:  
> -----  
> From: Pony Island Motel [info@ponyislandmotel.com](mailto:info@ponyislandmotel.com)  
> Date: Sat, 28 Mar 2015 08:55:28 -0400  
> To: [brich@hydecourtnc.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtnc.gov)  
> Subject: occ tax \$\$ for tourism board  
>  
>  
> Mr. Rich,  
>  
> I am expressing my concerns for taking some of the Occ. Tax money to  
> fund a tourism board. I personally do not think we need a tourism  
> board on or for Ocracoke. I think what we need to do is press the  
> state and NCDOT to repair the ferries and continue dredging so we can  
> offer more ferry runs to get the tourist to Ocracoke. The tourist are  
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> will not vote for this money being taken out and putting towards  
> something we do not need. If we have this kind of extra money I think  
> we need to put it towards getting ART back in the school on Ocracoke.  
>  
>  
>  
> Thanks for your time,  
>  
> Candy Gaskill  
>  
>  
>  
> PS I am writing this from my work email address so if you have a  
> reply to me could you send it to my personal one at  
> [dayzlviz66@yahoo.com](mailto:dayzlviz66@yahoo.com). The reason I am commenting from work is because  
> we get the updates here from the county and I don't at my personal email.  
>  
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> mail2web.com - Microsoft Exchange solutions from a leading provider -

> <http://link.mail2web.com/Business/Exchange>

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## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** Bill Rich <brich@hydecourtync.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015 5:13 PM  
**To:** 'Lois Stotesberry'  
**Subject:** FW: Occupancy tax money

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Ellen Gaskill [<mailto:ellengaskill@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2015 12:18 PM  
**To:** [middletownfarms@embarqmail.com](mailto:middletownfarms@embarqmail.com); [adtunnell@coastalnet.com](mailto:adtunnell@coastalnet.com); [jeanmincey@yahoo.com](mailto:jeanmincey@yahoo.com); [twbscsiii@aol.com](mailto:twbscsiii@aol.com); [bsswindell@yahoo.com](mailto:bsswindell@yahoo.com); [brich@hydecourtync.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtync.gov)  
**Subject:** Occupancy tax money

My family is opposed to Hyde County drawing out 100,000 from the occupancy tax funds to hire a fulltime countyemployee. Fund the OCBA instead with that amount.  
These funds have historically allowed Ocracoke to fund things that the county has been unable to do for us.

Sincerely,

Ellen Gaskill

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** Bill Rich <[brich@hydecourtync.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtync.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015 5:13 PM  
**To:** 'Lois Stotesberry'  
**Subject:** FW: Bill, I was present at the OCBA meeting the other night and I heard your argument, however after some contemplation I and at least two other Island people have decided that the institution of the additional 2% occupancy tax for tourism only is the be

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Jim Borland [<mailto:jsborland@centurylink.net>]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 27, 2015 4:38 PM  
**To:** [brich@hydecourtync.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtync.gov)  
**Subject:** Bill, I was present at the OCBA meeting the other night and I heard your argument, however after some contemplation I and at least two other Island people have decided that the institution of the additional 2% occupancy tax for tourism only is the best w

Sent from my iPad

## Lois Stotesberry

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**From:** Bill Rich <brich@hydecourtync.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2015 5:11 PM  
**To:** 'Lois Stotesberry'  
**Subject:** FW: Occupancy Tax Money

-----Original Message-----

**From:** C Scarborough [mailto:overthemoon95@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 29, 2015 10:09 AM  
**To:** [brich@hydecourtync.gov](mailto:brich@hydecourtync.gov); [twbscsiii@aol.com](mailto:twbscsiii@aol.com); [jeanmincey@yahoo.com](mailto:jeanmincey@yahoo.com); [adtunnell@coastalnet.com](mailto:adtunnell@coastalnet.com); [middletownfarms@embarqmail.com](mailto:middletownfarms@embarqmail.com); [bsswindell@yahoo.com](mailto:bsswindell@yahoo.com)  
**Subject:** Occupancy Tax Money

I would like to state that I am against taking \$100,000. of Occupancy Tax Funds to hire a county employee and promote tourism. While it may be legal, I do not believe it is what the money was intended for when the bill was passed. I am disappointed that the 2% additional occupancy tax was not instated. Our neighboring counties have it, it has been available to us since 2006 and it could be a huge source of income for Hyde County. It's choices like this that make me wonder if our county likes being in such pathetic shape financially....why we don't take advantage of things that could help us?

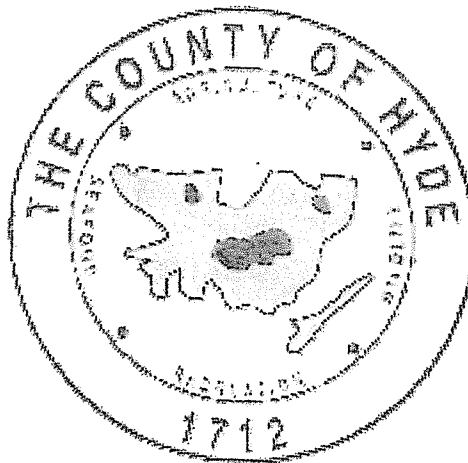
Cathy Scarborough



Request for Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Funds  
FY 2015-16

For the project entitled:

Comprehensive Tourism & Marketing Plan Development and  
Implementation Through the Creation of the  
Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau



Submitted by:  
Hyde County Office of Planning & Economic Development  
April 2015

Request for Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Funds  
FY 2015-16

This proposal outlines how the County of Hyde will streamline Ocracoke tourism marketing efforts through formation and implementation of a comprehensive Ocracoke Tourism Plan developed and managed by the Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau under the umbrella of the Hyde County Office of Planning & Economic Development.

1. Use of Funds

The Office of Planning & Economic Development recently completed a Comprehensive Marketing Study on Ocracoke Tourism and presented the study to the Hyde Board of Commissioners, the Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Board and various other public meetings. Research of economic trends as related to Ocracoke tourism have shown the greatest potential for increased revenues for the industry can be realized during the Spring and Fall seasons, typically referred to as the "shoulder seasons".

Obstacles have arisen including but not limited to complications with ferry routes, NPS permits and restrictions and weather but relatively little coordinated marketing efforts have been put in place to give visitors the information needed to overcome these obstacles. Coordinated efforts are necessary to keep Ocracoke competitive in this rapidly changing and unpredictable environment.

Current and past marketing efforts, while valuable to the industry, are fragmented and volunteer driven with little cohesion among groups. There is currently no clear structure to specifically channel tourism development activities among these groups.

The Ocracoke Civic & Business Association and Hyde County Chamber of Commerce, Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Board and other groups, are working towards common visions but are not working cooperatively towards a strategic action plan outlining goals for those entities.

State and regional resources are available but underutilized with Hyde County having such an unclear tourism development structure to these state and regional agencies.

The creation of the Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau under the Hyde County Office of Planning and Economic Development will create a structure for state, regional and local efforts to work synergistically under one umbrella without duplication utilizing resources more effectively and efficiently for the common goal of increasing commerce through tourism on Ocracoke.

The Office of Planning & Economic Development is asking to utilize \$100,000 of Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Funds during fiscal year 2015-16 to form and staff the Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau.

*Please see Attachment 1: Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau Projected Budget FY 2015-16*

Each line item of the proposed budget is described below:

- *Staff –*

The Hyde County Office of Planning & Economic Development (OPED) will hire one new full time administrative staff member to staff the Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau. OPED will work directly with the staff member and a three member advisory board containing members active in Ocracoke's lodging industry and/or currently involved in tourism promotion on policy making and strategy. This staff member will be the primary spokesperson for the Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau in addition to the Hyde County Public Information Officer.

In addition, OPED and the staff member will be responsible for but not limited to:

- ❖ Day to day operations of the Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau
- ❖ Office management and administration including financial management of annual budget
- ❖ Leading a branding initiative with local tourism stakeholders and marketing professionals to develop a comprehensive marketing plan
- ❖ Data collection and analytics to determine current and potential future visitor profiles
- ❖ Strategic planning including long term and short term goals
- ❖ Preparing and administering all public information including administering any informational web sites and/or social media sites
- ❖ Analyzing existing programs, facilities and organizations to foster tourism development (conferences, sports, special events, OCBA, Chamber)
- ❖ Maintaining effective communication between all tourism stakeholders
- ❖ Participating in government relations at all levels in the interest of promoting tourism development and the industry
- ❖ Attending meetings, events, conferences and trade shows

- ❖ Assisting in promotion of local events
- ❖ Preparation and organization of the advisory board's meetings including minutes and reports

The budget shows an allocation of \$40,000 in Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Funds and \$10,000 from the Hyde County General fund for salary and benefits not to exceed \$50,000.

- *Analytics*

It is important in the redevelopment of a tourism development program, to closely examine who your visitors are and where they are coming from. The Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau would utilize Visit North Carolina's proprietary measurement and analytics technology called Arrivalist available to Hyde through a state co-op plan. Arrivalist is able to track and measure actual arrivals to your destination based on a number of factors including, but not limited to, visits to your website, exposure to your display advertising, travel guide requests, etc. Arrivalist will work with you to place tracking pixels on your desired website pages and any additional advertising mediums, and when a potential visitor interacts with your site and/or digital advertising and travels to your destination, you'll be able to track the arrival as a conversion and optimize your digital efforts accordingly.

Reports will be available including media efficiency, origin markets, arrivals by state, seasonal trends impact and days to arrival reports. Collecting and analyzing this information will be critical during the first year of the Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau operations as we build a strong program based on factual data and meaningful trends leading us to our most effective means of advertising and promotion.

Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau would invest \$6,000 in this program during the next fiscal year.

- *Consulting Services*

OPED through the Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau will issue a Request for Proposals from qualified marketing firms to work with local stakeholders to develop a strategic tourism development plan for Ocracoke Island and corresponding marketing plan. OPED has successfully administered millions of dollars of federal, state and local funding for construction, design and engineering and strategic planning in past projects. This office is well versed in contracting and procurement requirements and will utilize Hyde County Attorney services during contract administration.

The process of branding Ocracoke Island will be critical during the strategic visioning process and the Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau will work with all groups and citizens on the island for public input along with state and regional groups offering resources through the process. The diversity among citizens and businesses on the island make it necessary to have an island wide strategy that can be grown into a strategic plan with a high level vision creating individual goals and objectives that are achievable and measureable.

This process is listed in the budget at an amount of \$30,000. Fees for services will be negotiated.

- *Website Upgrades and Redesign*

Currently the Ocracokevillage.com website administered by OCBA has the strongest web presence although its format is in need of redesign. In addition, the Hyde County Chamber of Commerce is on the verge of launching a newly redesigned website which specifically highlights Ocracoke Island. Both technical and monetary support for the Chamber's new site was provided by Tideland EMC.

While we believe that multiple websites for Ocracoke Island are advantageous, we also believe that these sites should be of high quality with real time information, cohesive in nature by promoting a common brand which is Ocracoke Island and complimentary to each other with user friendly links to commonly asked questions.

The Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau will work with the OCBA, Hyde Chamber and other groups hosting sites to sit down during the strategic planning process and devise a plan that enables each site to work at their highest utility while coordinating with one another to give visitors clear information on visiting the island.

The Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau would like to work with OCBA to redesign the existing web site and provide web hosting and site maintenance at an estimated cost included in the budget at \$10,000 for year one and recurring fees of \$1,500 each subsequent year to keep all information fresh and updated.

- *Media Package*

The first year of operations for the Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau will be laden with analytical research, relationship building, strategic planning, branding and website development to ensure that our target markets, media selections and messages are effective. Little direct marketing will be completed during this phase as we restructure and look closely at where we are spending our advertising dollars and how effective those investments are.

The proposed media package for FY 2015-16 will include a [www.visitnc.com](http://www.visitnc.com) enhanced listing. Participating in the enhanced listing will increase Ocracoke's presence on the Visit NC website. This provides opportunity to provide more engaging content to visitors who click on their listing to help further influence their travel decision making. Partner's enhanced listing video and brochure are accessible via the Visit NC site and enhancements are given top priority with the on-site search results. The Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau would like to work towards having a professional video created for the site and would like to invite OCBA to include their Walking Map under the brochure tab. This enhanced web presence is offered at \$750 a year.

The Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau would also engage in the paid search program with Visit NC allowing the top 25 internal keywords that have been identified, optimized, matched with other

similar keywords and made into keywords sets available for purchase. A corresponding text ad will appear at the top of the internal search linked directly to the partner site. In addition, the OVB would participate in the Featured Events program with Visit NC. Participants have the opportunity to call more attention to their events and festivals via Visit NC's featured event listings. In addition, Featured Events receive valuable placement in Visit NC's bi-weekly Events e Newsletter distributed to roughly 60,000 subscribers.

\$7,500 has been included in the budget for a strategic print and digital marketing campaign however line item detail of specific activities will be available only after the strategic planning process.

- *Equipment, Travel and Departmental Expenditures*

The staff member will have an equipment budget for the first year of \$1,000, departmental expenditures budget for supplies of \$1,000 and a travel budget of \$2,900. Equipment and supplies will be needed to set up the new office in Ocracoke. The travel budget is minimal but should provide staff to participate in Northeast Tourism meetings as well as a few carefully selected conferences.

## 2. Time Line

*Please see Attachment 1: Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau Projected Budget FY 2015-16*

The timeline for fiscal year 2015-16 is shown on Attachment 1 with corresponding budget line items. Initial activities include appointing an advisory board, hiring staff and beginning analytical research. The OVB will then start moving forward with community meetings and the selection of a professional marketing firm that will lead the effort on the strategic planning and marketing process through December of 2015. That work will generate the media tools needed to proceed with web design goals and strategic advertising campaigns beginning in January 2016 and continuing through the remainder of the fiscal year.

## 3. Current Balance Sheet

Five copies of the Hyde County Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2014 are included with this proposal.

## 4. Prior Years Profit and Loss or Cash Flow reflecting Occupancy Tax funds

While more detailed financial information can be found in the Hyde County Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2014 a brief synopsis of expenditures made from Ocracoke Occupancy Tax Funds to the County of Hyde are found below:

<u>Project/Purpose</u>	<u>Amount of Appropriation</u>	<u>Year of Appropriation</u>
Life Guards	\$10,000.00	FY 2014-15
Hyde EMS	\$180,000.00	FY 2014-15
Ferry Lobbyist Contract	\$7,500.00	FY 2014-15
Ferry Lobbyist Contract	\$7,500.00	FY 2013-14

**5. Budget**

*Please see Attachment 2: Ocracoke Visitor's Bureau Projected Budget FY 2015-16*

**6. Other Information Relative to Request**

*Please see Attached Marketing Study and supporting information*